



**Doncaster  
Council**

**Complaints and Compliments  
Annual Report for 2017/18**

Craig Miller & Lucy McMahon  
Customer Experience Officers

## 1. Introduction

This is the annual report for complaints and compliments that were received by the Authority in 2017/18 under both the Corporate Complaint's procedure and Adults Social Care complaints procedure. The statutory complaints function for Children's Social Care lies with Doncaster Children's Services Trust and information is reported in a separate statutory annual report.

The Council's definition of a complaint is:

***“An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action taken by the Council or their staff, which affects a customer or a group of customers”***

The Council has two procedures for dealing with complaints about services; the Adults' Social Care statutory procedure and the Corporate Complaints procedure. The aim of the complaint procedures is to resolve any dissatisfaction promptly, effectively and transparently and to assist with service improvements.

The Complaint procedures are managed by two Customer Experience Officers based in the Customer Services Team. They are responsible for managing the complaint and compliment processes and are available to support customers and staff to ensure that making a complaint is as easy as possible for all concerned. The Council's aim is to resolve complaints for our customers as quickly and simply as possible. The team identifies the importance of promoting complaints as a positive asset and using this information as a valuable learning opportunity helping to identify training and development needs. Effective complaint monitoring can assist in highlighting significant trends and identify necessary improvements to policy and procedure.

Complaints and compliments are recorded and managed through the corporate Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. All members of staff within the Council can record complaints and compliments through the corporate intranet using the online forms. Customers can log complaints and compliments on our website or can request them to be recorded through their preferred access channel.

The CRM system holds records of all complaints and compliments and is used to manage the status and timescales of complaint handling within the organisation. It also enables us to identify and analyse trends and lessons learned to help us to improve our customer's experience.

## 2. Procedures

### 2.1 Corporate Complaints Procedure

#### Early Resolution

Complaints that can be fully resolved to the complainant's satisfaction within 3 working days is the Council's preferred method of dealing with complaints. We aim to deal with the majority of complaints by early resolution. However, the Council will

need to deal with some complaints through a formal Investigation approach due to their complexity.

### **Stage 1 – Local Resolution**

At this stage a senior officer within the service area will investigate the complaint and send a full response to the complainant within 10 working days.

### **Stage 2 – Complaint Investigation**

If the complainant is unhappy with the outcome or response, they can appeal and ask for their complaint to be looked at again under stage 2 of the complaints procedure. Stage 2 investigations are conducted by an independent senior officer from a different directorate. Their role is to ensure that a thorough investigation is carried out and a full response provided to the complainant within 20 working days. The Stage 2 investigation is the end of the Council's complaints procedure, there is no further right to appeal to the Council following completion of the Investigation

### **Stage 3 – Local Government Social Care Ombudsman**

Following a full Stage 2 investigation a complainant can approach the Local Government Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO). The LGSCO will not usually investigate a complaint unless it has been dealt with through the Council's complaint procedure first. The option to approach the LGSCO is the third and final stage of the Council's complaints procedure and is the final point of contact to resolve complaints.

## **2.3 Adult Social Care Complaint Procedure**

The procedure used to handle complaints concerning adult social care services is Health and Social Care Making Experiences Count. The overarching aim of the procedure is to resolve matters to the complainant's satisfaction.

It is the purpose of the complaints procedure to provide the directorate of Adults, Health and Wellbeing with feedback about the matters arising from social care complaints and the lessons learned in order to shape, develop and improve future services.

When dealing with complaints we follow a set procedure that aims to protect the rights of all adult social care service users. Problems should be resolved fairly and openly. The procedure also helps us to make our services better by highlighting where we need to improve.

The procedure has two stages:

### **Stage 1: Local resolution**

The aim is to resolve as many complaints as possible by the team the complaint relates to. The manager of the team will investigate the complaint and respond in

writing within a set timescale that has been agreed with the complainant. If the complainant is still not satisfied that their complaint has been resolved they can contact the Customer Experience Team within 20 working days to discuss further options available.

## **Stage 2: Contacting the Local Government Social Care Ombudsman**

If the complainant is still dissatisfied they can contact the Local Government Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO). The LGSCO will not usually investigate a complaint unless it has been dealt with through the Council’s complaint procedure first.

The LGSCO can consider complaints about:

- Things that have gone wrong with a council service
- The way a decision has been made

## **3. Outcome and resolution**

There are 3 main categories for classifying the outcome of a complaint, which are as follows:

- Upheld: This is defined as a decision that was confirmed or supported, meaning we agree there were faults in a complaint.
- Partially Upheld: We agree that there were faults in part of a complaint.
- Not Upheld: We do not agree that there were faults.

In cases where a complaint is found to be upheld or partially upheld an apology is always given for the faults that have occurred. In some instances, the investigator of the complaint may recommend that training is offered to relevant staff members to ensure any knowledge gaps are addressed. There may also be instances whereby complainants are offered a gesture of goodwill for time and trouble in making their complaint, this can be in the form of money or sometimes a gift. In most cases, where a fault has been identified and a recommendation made, the Customer Experience Officer will monitor this to ensure any agreed action is taken.

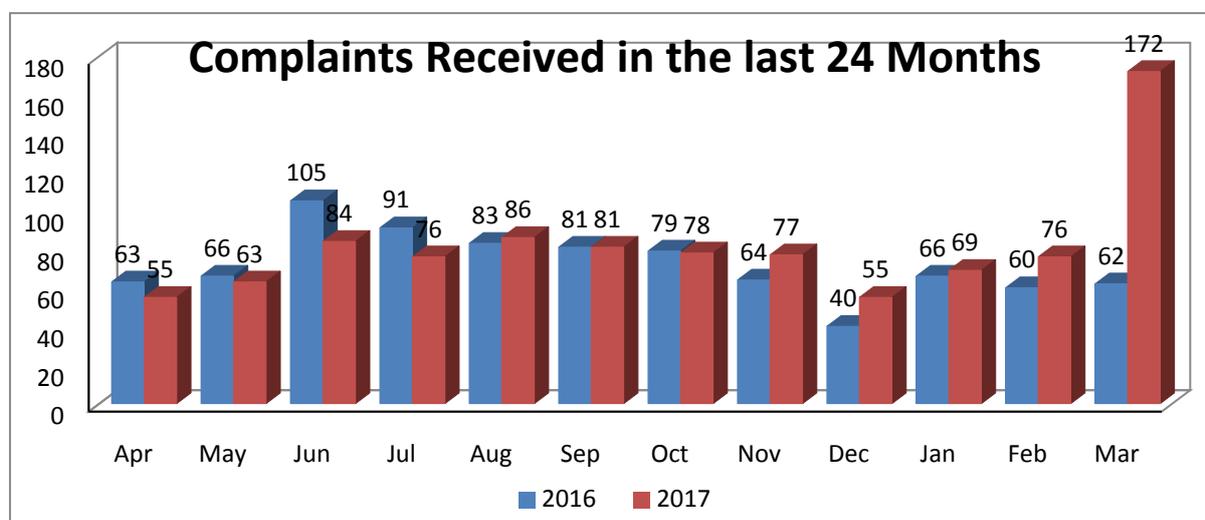
## **4. How complaints were received**

<b>Access Channel</b>	<b>% Received in 2016/17</b>	<b>% Received in 2017/18</b>
Website	58%	70%
Telephone	40%	25%
Email	1%	4%
Face to Face	1%	1%

Complaints can be made by a number of different access channels, website, telephone, email, letter and face-to-face. In the reporting year 2017/18, the majority of complaints were logged by customers on our website, an increase across all service areas of 12%. Adult Social Care saw an increase of 22% of their complaints being reported online.

## 5. Corporate Complaints

### 5.1 Number of complaints received and percentage responded to in timescale



Overall the number of complaints received each month over the two years remains fairly consistent. The significant increase in March 2018 was due to changes in the Waste & Recycling service, which resulted in an increase in complaints for this service.

Directorate	2016/17	2016/17	2017/18	2017/18
Adults - Communities	21	95%	19	89%
Corporate Resources	240	97%	207	96%
Regen & Environment	887	76%	804	68%
LOCYPS	23	95%	14	86%

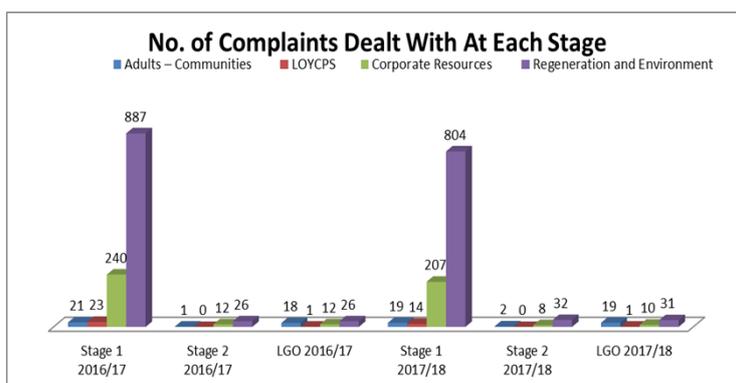
During the reporting year 2017/18 we received a total of 1044 formal corporate complaints, this is an 11% reduction from the previous year. Regeneration and Environment consistently receives the highest amount of complaints, this is to be expected as they are the largest area delivering the widest range of services to our customers. For example, Waste & Recycling is a service that is delivered to every household in the borough every week, compared to other services that are only accessed by a small proportion of the Authority.

Waste & Recycling received 457 complaints in 2017/18 compared to 423 in 2016/17. The high number of complaints in this area is due to changes in the Waste & Recycling contract over the past two years, such as;

- Changes to customers' collection days.
- Introduction of a new recycling service
- Charging for new and missing bins.

As the changes to the service have now become embedded, Waste and Recycling are now seeing a reduction in the number of complaints being received.

The graph below shows a breakdown of how many complaints were dealt with at each stage of the complaints procedure. In 2017/18 there was a slight reduction in the number of complaints dealt with at stage 1, however the number dealt with at stage 2 and the number of complainants that appealed to the Local Government Ombudsman remain similar to 2016/17.



The table below shows a breakdown of the outcome of complaint investigations. In 2017/18 we have seen a reduction in the number of complaints being upheld. This year The Customer Experience Team have carried out additional training and coaching to managers across the Authority who are responsible for investigating and responding to complaints.

Year	No. of Stage 1 complaints	Upheld	Partially Upheld	Not Upheld
2017/18	1044	44%	20%	36%
2016/17	1171	52%	16%	31%

## 5.2 Trends 2017/18

<p><b>Adults - Communities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Rough sleepers in town centre</li> <li>▪ Closure of Quarry Park car park</li> <li>▪ Concierge service at Balby flats</li> </ul>
<p><b>LOYCPS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Schools Admission process</li> </ul>
<p><b>Corporate Resources:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Call waiting times</li> <li>▪ Incorrect information provided</li> <li>▪ Council Tax annual billing issues</li> </ul>
<p><b>Regeneration and Environment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Changes to bin collections days/ missed collections /Charges for replacement bins</li> <li>▪ Lack of updates to tree enquiries / Quality of grass cutting</li> <li>▪ Quality of street cleansing</li> </ul>

## **6. Lessons Learned from corporate complaints and service improvements**

### **Case study 1**

Complaint details: Complaint received regarding the decision not to award a blue badge and communication letters that were sent with regards to the decision.

Actions taken: Apology, change in procedure for panel hearing. Amendments made to decision letter sent to customers.

### **Case study 2**

Complaint details: Complaint about the light shining from a newly installed street column outside house. The issue has been raised several times but feels nothing has been done.

Actions taken: Apology, Explanation given about timeframe, Equipment fitted to redirect light.

### **Case study 3**

Complaint details: Complaint about information provided in a telephone call and the attitude of the member of staff.

Actions taken: Telephone call to apologise to customer. Quality and monitoring of advisors calls and training provided.

### **Case study 4**

Complaint details: Complaint about persistent missed waste collections at customers address

Actions taken: Apology given, monitoring of customers collections, contact made to ensure now happy with the service.

### **Case study 5**

Complaint details: Customer has made a number of reports about litter in his area that are not being looked into. He also feels there is a lack of waste bins since a new McDonalds has opened.

Actions taken: Apology given, McDonalds have agreed to fund a bin in the area, extra litter patrols are to take place.

## 7. Adult Social Care Complaints

### 7.1 Total number of individual complaints received

During the reporting year 2017/18, 82 formal complaints were received. This is a reduction from the previous year of 21%.

Year	No of formal (Stage 1) complaints	No of informal complaints (early resolution)
2017/18	82	10
2016/17	104	11

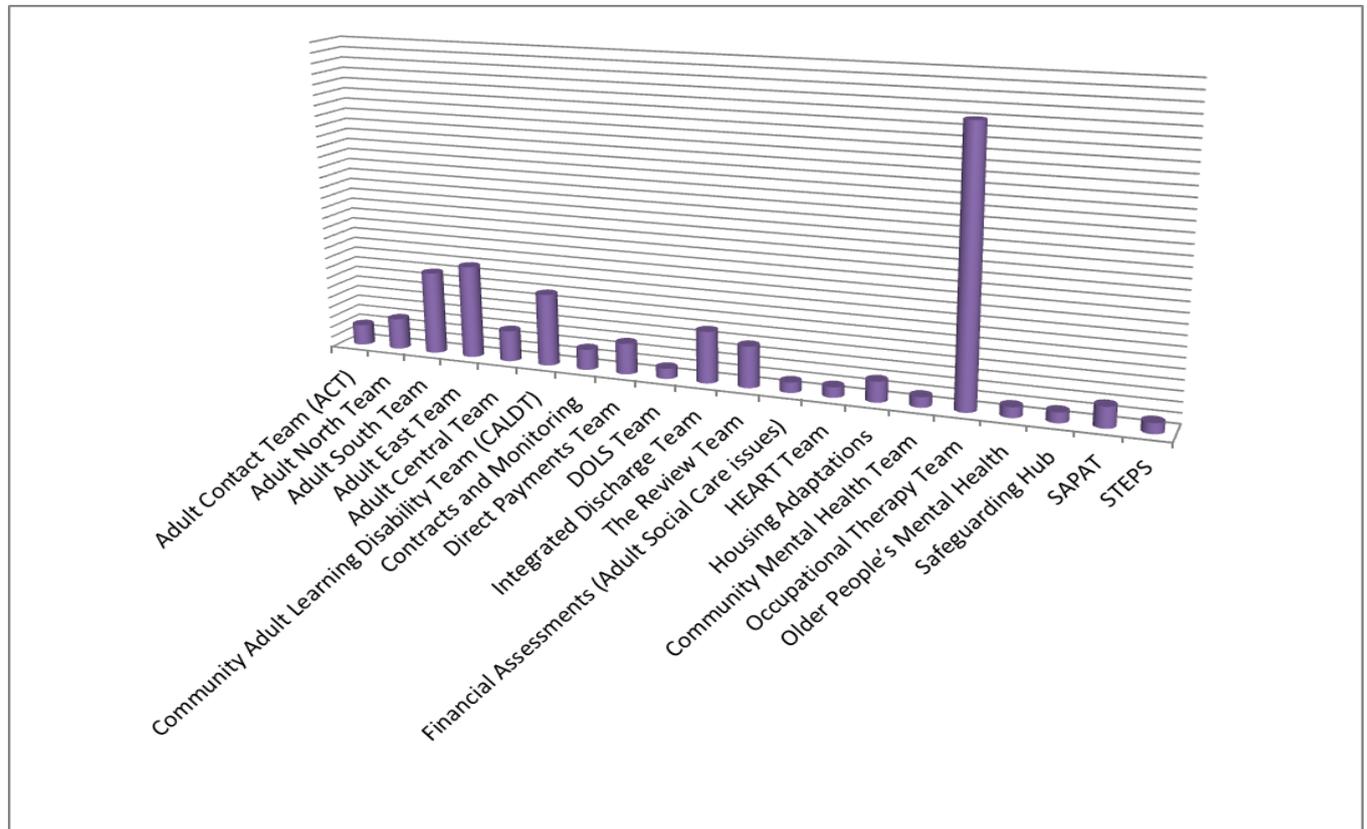
### 7.2 Stage 1 Complaints

The table below shows a breakdown of the outcome of the complaint investigations. There was a 7% increase in the number of complaints that were upheld and an 8% reduction in complaints being found partially upheld.

Year	No of formal (Stage 1) complaints	Upheld/Partially upheld %
2017/18	82	43%
2016/17	104	44%

### 7.3 Breakdown of Stage 1 Complaints by Area

Below is a breakdown of the 82 Stage 1 complaints received by service area:



32% of the complaints were received by the Occupational Therapy (OT) Team. The main theme being the waiting times for assessment. Intensive work has started with the team within Adults, Health and Wellbeing Services with the focus being around waiting times, managing expectations and reducing complaints.

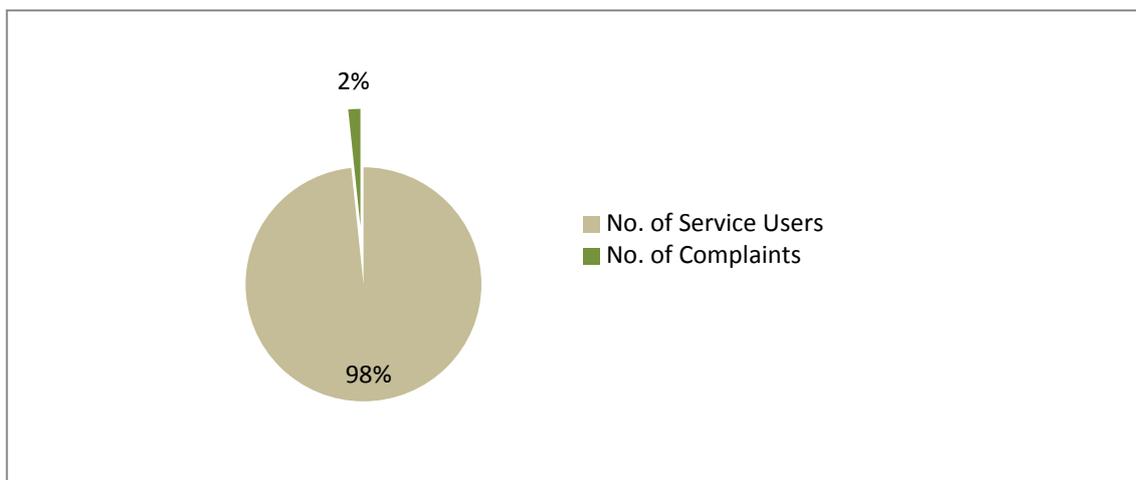
## 8. Breakdown of Complaint Themes and outcomes

The complaints received during 2017/18 relate to a number of different themes which are set out in the table below, including upheld/partially upheld outcomes.

Subject of Complaint	Complaints 2016/17	No. Upheld or Partially Upheld 16/17	Complaints 2017/18	No. Upheld or Partially Upheld 17/18
Staff Attitude	6	4	4	2
Poor Communication	12	6	7	5
Lack of action by worker/team	5	1	0	0
Quality of service from worker/team	21	9	22	10
Incorrect/insufficient information given in respect of care/financial contributions	17	4	11	3
Lack of help from Adult Social Care	6	3	11	2
Outcome of Assessment	0	0	7	4
Time taken to undertake assessment	10	4	8	4
Time taken to supply equipment	0	0	1	0
Time taken to act on concerns	3	3	0	0
Time taken to undertake works	1	0	2	1
Handling of safeguarding investigation	8	7	1	1
Handling of discharge	5	1	2	1
Issues with Care Provider	2	2	4	1
Care provided by DMBC Care Home/day centre	2	1	0	0
Decisions made at Best	1	1	1	0

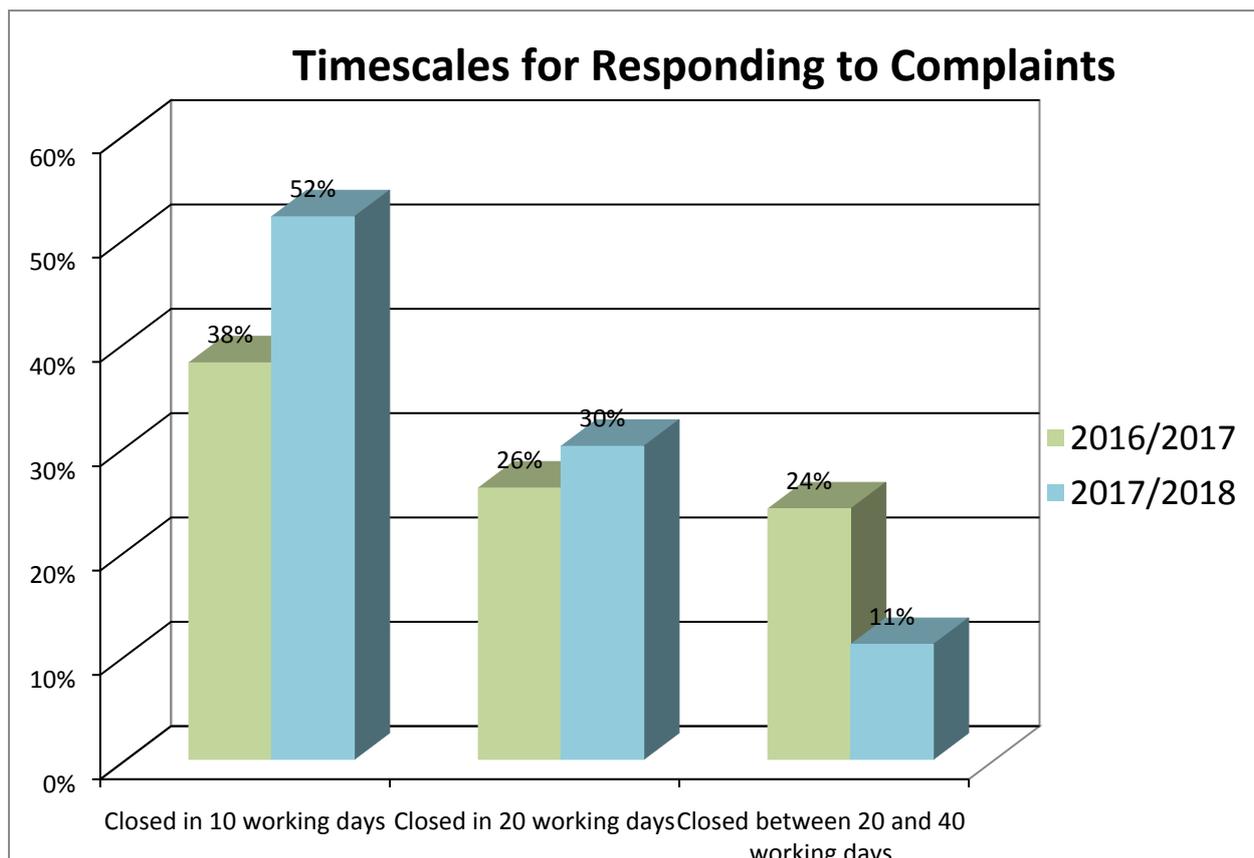
Interest Meeting				
Issues with Correspondence sent to service user/carer	5	1	2	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>35</b>

### 8.1 Proportion of complaints vs number of Adult Social Care Service Users



### 8.2 Responding to complaints and timescales

There is no set timescale for responding to Adult Social Care complaints as each timescale for response is discussed and agreed with the complainant. However it is our aim to respond to complaints as swiftly as possible. In 2017/18 the average number of days to close a complaint was 13, in the previous reporting year this was 22. The following graph shows the number of working days taken to close complaints in 2017/18 compared with 2016/17.



## 9. Lessons learned from complaints and service improvements

Complaints are a valuable tool for learning and the Council welcomes feedback to be used as an opportunity to make service improvements. When a complaint is upheld or partially upheld the complainant is advised of the action to be taken as a result of the findings. The responding officer is sent a 'Lessons Learned Form' to complete and return documenting any action that has been or is due to be taken. This is monitored by the Customer Experience Team to ensure any outstanding actions are completed.

It is important that lessons are learned from complaints and improvements are fed back into services to avoid the same complaint issues being repeated.

Below are some examples of actions taken as a result of the complaint findings.

### Case study 1

**Complaint details:** Complaint received regarding the handling of discharge from hospital by social care and the poor communication experienced which resulted in a care placement not being available

**Actions taken:** Firstly an apology was given for the issues that occurred. Process introduced by the Integrated Discharge Team for an e-mail to be sent to the relevant

care home prior to discharge to ensure clear documentation is available for management within the care home to review.

### **Case study 2**

Complaint details: Carer feels that care package has been set up wrong and would like the case reviewed.

Actions taken: As a result of the complaint it was identified that there was a knowledge gap around Direct Payments therefore further training was arranged for social workers.

### **Case study 3**

Complaint details: Family were unhappy with the DOLS report carried out in respect their relative.

Action taken: The report was redrafted and the procedure was changed to be checked by a senior manager before being released.

### **Case study 4**

Complaint details: Complaint received about the lack of information regarding closure of a Care Home.

Action taken: Process implemented to ensure clear and concise information is available to residents and families around home closures where applicable.

## **10. Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)**

Complainants have the right to approach the LGSCO at any time to make a complaint. The LGSCO will normally pass the complaint back to the local authority if the complainant has not yet given the Council the opportunity to resolve the complaint through our complaints procedures. The LGSCO may also pass the complaint back to the council if they consider that there is more to be done to resolve the complaint.

The LGSCO will contact the Council should they decide that the matter falls within their jurisdiction and wish to investigate further. When a complaint is received from the LGSCO the Customer Experience Team works closely with managers across the authority to ensure quality and performance standards are met, responses are delivered on time, accurate information issued and detailed explanations provided as to the resolution and lessons learned from the complaint.

The LGSCO publish an annual review letter every year which details the complaints that they have received for each authority (Appendix 1).

The tables below detail the complaints that the LGSCO received for Doncaster Council for the past 2 years and details of the decisions made by the LGSCO.

<b>Service Area*</b>	<b>No. Received 2016/17</b>	<b>No. Received 2017/18</b>
Adults Care Services	18	19
Benefits and Tax	8	5
Corporate Resources	4	5
Education and Children's	16	18
Environmental Services	7	13
Highways and Transport	6	6
Housing	7	8
Planning and Development	13	12
Other	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>86</b>

*\*The LGSCO's definitions of service areas.*

<b>Decision Made</b>	<b>Number Received in 2016/17</b>	<b>Number Received in 2017/18</b>
Incomplete or Invalid	4	1
Advice Given	2	2
Referred back to Authority	31	31
Closed after initial enquiries	20	24
Not upheld	9	12
Upheld	8	13
<b>Upheld Rate</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>52%</b>

Over the past 2 years the top areas for complaints investigated by the LGSCO have remained the same. Adult Social Care has received the highest amount in both years and this is closely followed by Education and Children's. This follows the trend that the LGSCO have for all authorities, with these areas receiving the highest amount across the country. The Council has received a slight increase in complaints for Environmental Services, these have been for the Waste and Recycling service. These were regarding persistent missed collections and charges for replacement bins.

There has been an increase in the amount of investigations that the LGSCO have carried out. In 2016/17 this was 17 compared to 25 in 2017/18. The upheld rate has also slightly increased from 47% to 52%. Following recommendations from the LGSCO in 2017/18 we have paid £6400 in compensation compared to £2195 paid in 2016/17. £5950 of this amount were relating to Adult Social Care Complaints.

The council received a public maladministration report in August 2018, which will appear in the LGSCO figures for 2018/19. The report is about a child's housing and

adaptations needs and details of how the case was handled. The complaint was received by the council on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017 and was investigated under the Adult Social care complaints procedure. The investigation from the Ombudsman found fault in the following areas: The Council took over three years to find a property that would meet the family's needs; failed to meet the family's needs in a temporary way while it was trying to find a permanent solution; considered tenure, which was irrelevant, in deciding it could not meet the needs it identified; and failed to explain in the panel's decision why it decided to go against the professional recommendations of the Occupational Therapist. The council are in the process of putting measure in place to ensure that a case like this does not happen again and are working with the family to ensure all of the LGSCO's recommendations are carried out. The report has been shared with the public and is available on our website <http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/get-in-touch/the-local-government-ombudsman>

### **10.1 Examples of recommendations made by the LGSCO following investigations**

*Summary: The Council failed to make suitable arrangements for Mrs X's emergency respite care. It also failed to carry out a proper safeguarding investigation and delayed in restarting the safeguarding process. The Council agrees it should now apologise to Mrs X's family, make a payment of £1000 in recognition of the distress its actions caused and a further payment of £300 each to Mrs A and Mr J to acknowledge the time and trouble in making this complaint.*

*Summary: There was fault in the Council's handling of Mr X's Blue Badge application. The Council has apologised to Mr X, issued a Blue Badge and offered £150 as a time and trouble payment so the Ombudsman is completing his investigation.*

*Summary: The Council was not at fault in the way in which it carried out financial assessments and investigated potential deprivation of assets in relation to care costs for Mrs A's late mother, Mrs B. But, it was at fault in giving unclear advice to Mrs A's father, Mr B, about the type of valuation it could accept for a second property they had owned. So, Mr B needlessly incurred the significant cost of a professional surveyor's valuation on behalf of Mrs B. The Council has agreed to apologise and to reimburse Mr B for the cost of the valuation.*

*Summary: The Council was at fault for not adequately communicating the terms and conditions covering rental of a market pitch. This led to uncertainty about whether the complainant could receive a refund of rent when he could not trade due to illness. The Council is recommended to remedy the complaint by providing a 50% refund to the complainant for the periods he could not trade.*

*Summary: Mrs E complains about the quality of care provided to her uncle by the Council's contracted provider. The Ombudsman finds fault as the Council did not investigate the complaints properly. This put Mrs E to unnecessary time and trouble in making her complaint. To remedy the complaint the Council has agreed to apologise, pay £300 to Mrs E for her time and trouble and carry out a thorough investigation into the allegations around poor care.*

*Summary: The Council delayed making a decision on a disabled facilities grant application. It made its decision on the application with fault. It caused injustice through delay and distress*

caused and because its lack of clarity means Ms X does not know why it refused her application. It will consider the application again without fault, apologise to Ms X and pay her for £500 for the distress and delay it has caused.

## 11. St Leger Homes (SLHD)

St. Leger Homes of Doncaster (SLHD) are an arms-length organisation responsible for managing the council's 21,000 homes. SLHD has a Customer Relations Team who manage all aspects of complaints received into the organisation and sometimes there may be occasions where a complaint may involve services provided by SLHD and the Council, in these instances a joined up approach to the complaint is co-ordinated by both agencies.

In 2017/18 SLHD received 884 complaints. Out of these complaints 226 were upheld and 658 were not upheld. In 2018/19 the council will continue to work with SLHD as necessary to ensure that a smooth and seamless service is provided to customers.

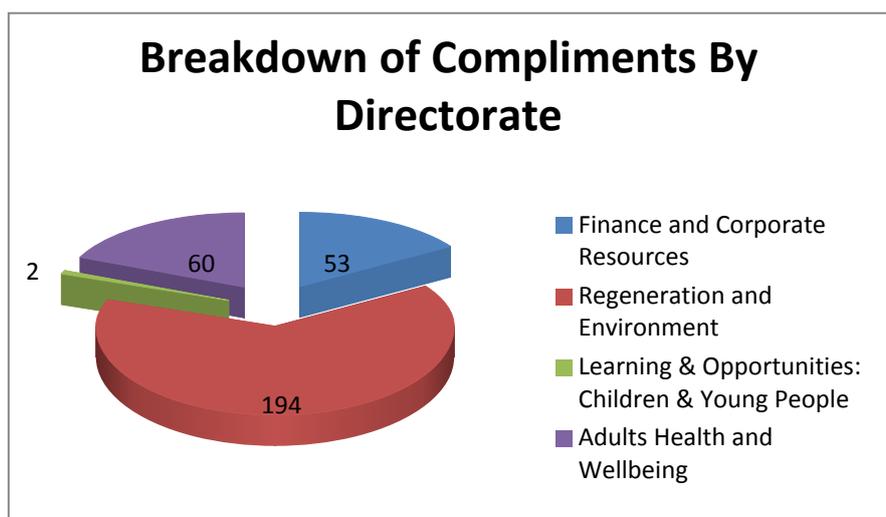
## 12. Compliments

### 12.1 Corporate & Adult Social Care

Customer feedback captured through compliments is vital in helping to measure areas of good practice and sharing this amongst services. Compliments are considered just as important as complaints in helping shape and develop services.

In 2017/18 a total of 311 compliments were received across the Council, which is a 56% increase on 2016/17. The Customer Experience Team has been working with service areas to promote the importance of recording compliments so we can recognise and celebrate excellent service delivery across the Council.

The following graph shows a breakdown of compliments by Directorate for 2017/18.

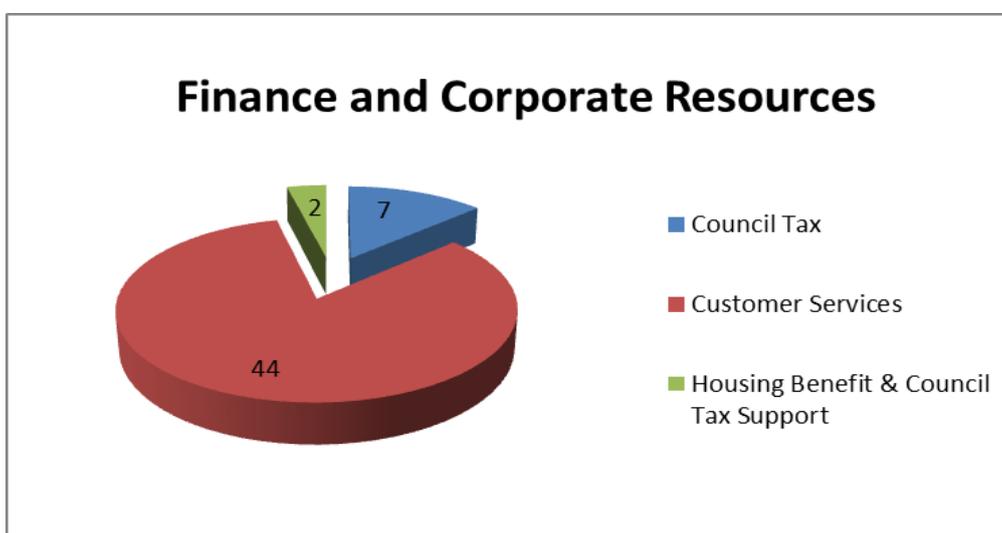
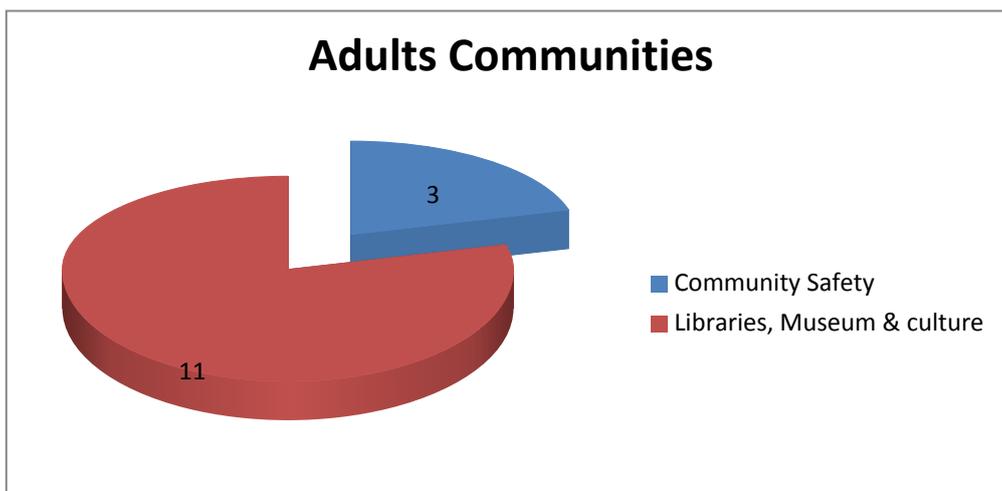
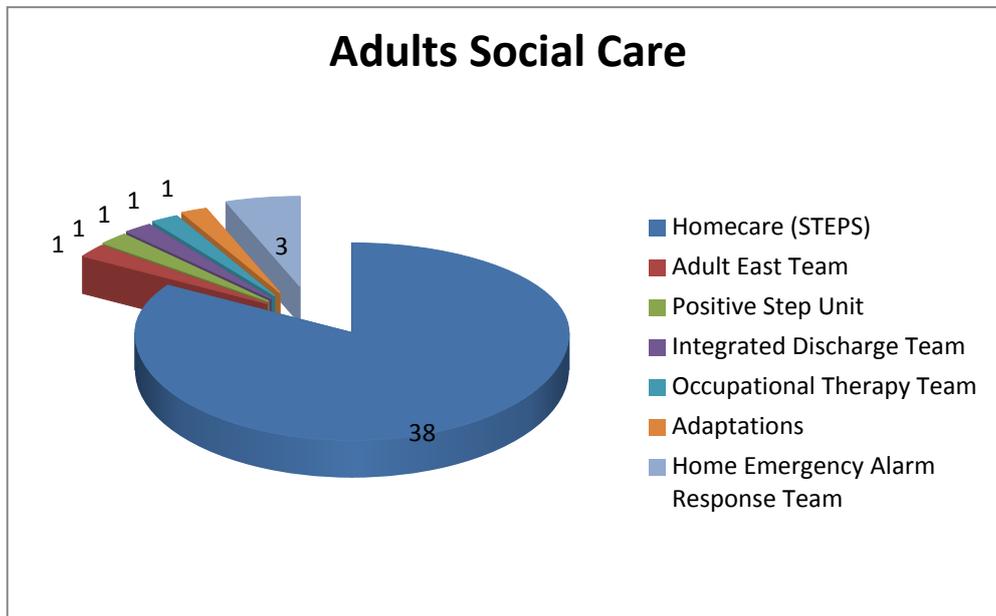


Compliments to Doncaster Council can be made through a number of access channels, website, telephone or face to face. This year has seen a significant increase in customers reporting compliments via our website.

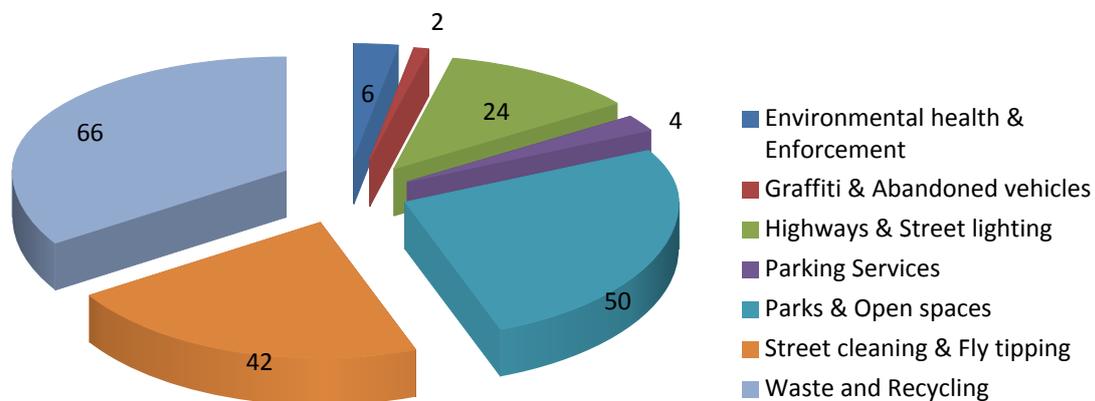
## 12.2 Compliments received by access channel

<b>Access Channel</b>	<b>% Received in 2016/17</b>	<b>% Received in 2017/18</b>
Website	37%	56%
Telephone	60%	40%
Face to Face	3%	4%

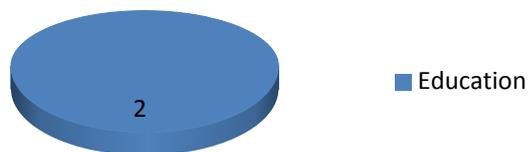
### 12.3 Compliments by Directorate & Service Areas



## Regeneration and Environment



## Learning & Opportunities: Children & Young People



### 12.4 Examples of compliments received

In total DMBC received **311** Compliments between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, below are some examples of the compliments received.

#### Adult Social Care

*"My STEPS service will be ending on 5 November and I wish to say thank you for providing it - A job well done and to a very high standard. In the USA there is a nationwide franchise business providing home care to seniors with the name of "Visiting Angels" an apt description which fits so well to the ladies who have visited me every day over the past few weeks. It will be a sad day for me when I have to say bye for the last time. They will be sorely missed and always remembered. Thank you \* and \* and thanks also to my Case Manager \* who also puts "Caring" as her highest priority."*

*"Thank you very, very much to the gentleman who phoned to check I was alright in the bad weather last week. It was absolutely marvellous"*

*The purpose of this email is to compliment your department generally but in particular \* who was magnificent and untiring in her aim to help us and help \* and lead us safely through the minefield of Social Care and co-ordinating the various elements of the department to make our journey as seamless and painless as possible. As my wife & I live 120 miles away but still visited 3/4 times per week, \* help and that of her colleagues was greatly appreciated.*

*I would like to think that although your post covers a wide range of issues within Adult Social Care, you are aware of the hard work and success that unsung heroes like \* and the team achieve and they are to be valued and commended accordingly.”*

*“Team of carers were friendly, helpful and professional they immediately put my family at ease in a situation we have not experienced before and provided reassurance that we need not cope with a difficult situation alone”*

### Customer services

*“Please can I commend one stop shop staff for the caring and compassionate way they dealt with a lady who had dementia in the one stop shop. Members of staff noticed the signs & contacted the necessary people and staff were able to contact a family member who came and picked the lady up. I feel that members of staff should be recognised for how they dealt with that customer.*

*“You have a great service here, very efficient”*

*“Great service received, very helpful and a pleasure to speak to”*

*“... Took everything on board to ensure that my issue was dealt with as quickly as possible, she was very helpful, pleasant and professional”*

### Education

*“Going above my expectations, her support and advice is so thorough and in depth, I finally feel assured that my son will be getting the best help with .... Involvement, I feel so grateful we have her on board”*

*“Extremely professional but at the same time friendly, caring and helpful”*

### Highways and Street Lighting

*“I just want to thank the council staff who were gritting on Thursday. As you know, Conisbrough is very hilly and the staff were working hard. My daughter also mentioned that they were helping an old man up the road. They deserve credit”*

*“You are doing a fantastic job”*

*“Street lights repaired in less than 24 hours, a big thank you to the teams involved”*

### Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support

*“I would just like to pass on my compliments to staff dealing with my situation; the two members of staff were really compassionate and helpful to me”*

*“Friendly, understanding, professional and caring staff dealing with council tax after a relative passed away”*

### Libraries, Museums and Culture

*“I’ve visited many grand houses, but Cusworth is my favourite... Sometimes just to sit at the top of the hill and watch the world go by. This place is so special; I even married the love of my life there”*

*“I have been to visit Cusworth Hall today and want sing its praises. I travel around god’s county of Yorkshire and would be hard pressed to get a warmer, friendly welcome in this lovely place”*

### Parks and open spaces

*“Please pass on my massive THANKS to all staff connected with the planning, planting and maintenance of the wonderful wildflower planting areas and all the floral efforts by DMBC. I have made this compliment in previous years, but please, it would be good to know my heartfelt thanks”*

*“Staff are dedicated, hardworking, work very well as a team and great ambassadors for the council!”*

### Street Cleaning and Fly Tipping

*“I would like to say what a lovely service some of your workers provide in Highfields, especially one of the members of staff who empty the bins outside of the post office; he is a very hard worker and a lovely sense of humour”*

*“Staff who cleared up rubbish did a brilliant job, they were very polite and jolly, I am very happy with how fast the issue was dealt with”*

### Waste and Recycling

*“Please pass on thanks to the refuse crew who found my purse either under or near a car in my street, they knocked on doors until they found me”*

*“I’d like to provide some grateful feedback to the team who manages the kerbside collections in Doncaster. I thought the information leaflets were really useful and easy to follow, and the service has remained on schedule”*

*“My bin day has changed, so for the crew to move to a new service without missing a bin collection is great, it can’t be an easy job, but I believe in giving recognition where it is due”*

*“I would just like to say thank you to the staff at the Armthorpe site who always help me if I have a very heavy load to tip into the skip. If I can manage on my own, I do, but they sometimes even volunteer unasked. Customer care at its best!”*

*“The green bin crew went out of their way to help us; people like this who are polite and go over and above do deserve recognition”*

### **13. Summary**

Throughout 2017/18 the Customer Experience Team has continued to support all Council services in delivering complaints and compliments procedures as robustly as possible. This has been provided formally through training, in particular in Adult Social care Services where the LGSCO attended to deliver complaint handling training, and informally by the Customer Experience Team where advice has been available ad-hoc.

Instances of poor practice and recurrent complaint themes continue to be shared with senior managers to provide a clear understanding of the main issues of complaint in their area and to ensure service improvements can be implemented at the appropriate level. Any changes to services resulting from upheld/partially upheld complaints are closely monitored by the Customer Experience Team so that actions are taken forward and followed through.

Waste and Recycling has been identified as an area receiving a high number of corporate complaints and the Occupational Therapy (OT) Team have received the highest number of Adult Social Care complaints in the reporting year. Whilst the majority of Waste and Recycling Complaints are upheld/partially upheld, the issues being raised are not highlighting a long term issue with the service. For example missed collections have occurred due to the bin collection day's changing. However the Customer Experience Team does continue to work closely with the Waste and Recycling Team to ensure timely responses and actions where possible. The OT Team being identified as the highest number of complaints for Adult Social Care has changed from the previous reporting year and the increase in complaints in 2017/18 is significant in comparison. The Customer Experience Team is involved in project work within Adult Social Care Services to look at common complaint themes relating to OT complaints and service improvements that can be made to reduce complaints of this nature in the future.

It is promising that the majority of complaints and compliments registered have been received via the Council's website or by email. This has enabled better communication with the customer, allowing timelier updates and responses.

### **14. Priorities for 2018/19**

The key priorities for the Customer Experience Team in 2018/19 will be to continue to provide an expert service in complaint handling, promoting the sharing of good practice as well as poor practice so that lessons can be learned. Across the Council the focus will be on reducing complaints through service improvements which in turn should reduce the number of complaints being upheld or partially upheld.

It has been identified that as the Customer Experience Team has involvement with all aspects of complaints, it would be beneficial to provide an annual report to include corporate complaints as well as statutory Adult Social Care Complaints. Previous annual reports produced by the council since the formation of Doncaster Children's Service Trust in 2015 have only included statutory complaints as set out in *The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009*. The report for 2017/18 is the first report for many years to include

complaint information relating to corporate complaints alongside Adult Social Care complaints, with the focus being around lessons learned and service improvements. Going forward in 2018/19 a combined annual report will be produced by the Customer Experience Team detailing the trends and themes for complaints for the council as a whole and the work undertaken around this.

The Customer Experience Team will continue to maintain relationships with partner agencies to provide a joined-up and seamless approach to complaints where applicable and keep up to date with any changes in procedures for these agencies.